

INTRODUCTION TO THE FRIENDLY VISITOR PROGRAM DARIEN TOWN HALL – TEL. (203) 656-7321

An enduring quote by Helen Keller: **“Friendships create the world anew each day.”**

A Friendly Visitor volunteer first and foremost offers a friendship and meaningful relationship to a Senior Friend. Through this program, caring men and women make regular visits to selected, older residents of Darien who are in need of companionship or have become isolated from their family, friends or community for various reasons. They may be homebound, in the care of staff in a convalescent home, reside in Senior Housing or be active in the community on a limited level.

Careful and considerate matching of a Friendly Visitor and Senior Friend is done through an orientation interview so the best possible arrangement is made for the mutual benefit of both parties.

It is **NOT** the responsibility of the volunteer to be a social worker, pastor, maintenance man, physician or lawyer. **BE A FRIEND.** The full backup services of the Darien Social Services Department and the community are available if some special need arises.

Friendly Visitors bring a precious gift, a bit of their time and themselves to brighten the days of less active neighbors. While there is a wonderful variety of things a Friendly Visitor might do with a Senior Friend here are just a few ideas.

- Discuss current events. Bring a current issue of news magazine.
- Read to your friend whose sight may be failing.
- Play a board game or card game; do a crossword puzzle
- Listen to music together and talk about your favorite recordings.

Committing to a social visit of just one hour a week is the recommendation we make to our volunteers. In turn, ongoing support and guidance is provided. Peer support comes through the Friendly Visitor group meetings scheduled periodically. Visitors exchange information, concerns and ideas. New community resources will be discussed, and books and articles of interest will be shared. Volunteers are encouraged to stay in touch with Social Services on a regular basis.

We encourage you to consider becoming a Friendly Visitor, share yourself, make a positive impact, and you will find your own life enriched by the encounter.

This program is national in scope and available in most towns in the State. It is supported locally by the Town of Darien. For more information, or a volunteer application please call our office at #656-7321.

